PRELIMINARY SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

Submitted to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in July 2007

THIRD UNITARIAN CHURCH BUILDING

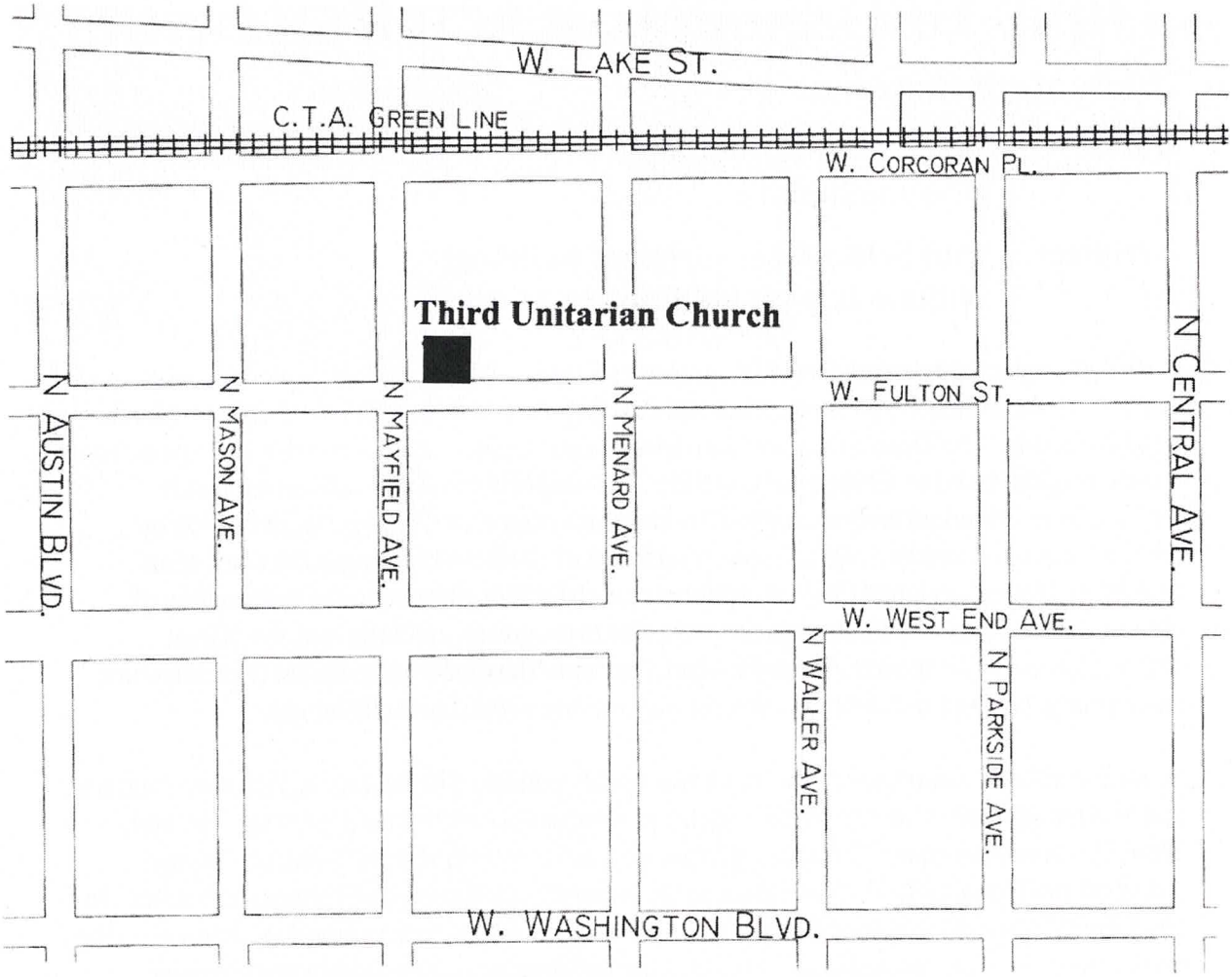
301 N. Mayfield Avenue

Built: **1936 (original building)**
1956 (addition)

Architects: **Paul Schweikher (original building)**
William B. Fyfe (addition)

With their high quality architecture, art, and historical associations, houses of worship play an important role in anchoring communities and defining the visual character of Chicago's diverse neighborhoods. The Third Unitarian Church building is located on a quiet residential site in the Austin neighborhood on Chicago's West Side. The simple but visually distinctive church building is an important early example of modern architecture in Chicago. Built in 1936 by architect Paul Schweikher, and sensitively added to in 1956, the building is the work of an important Chicago architect. This exceptional church building represents the culmination of circumstances including: a congregation receptive to progressive architecture, the "Great Depression" which imposed a limited budget, the rise of the modern movement in architecture, and a young, talented architect who saw the opportunity within these challenges.

When it was built, Third Unitarian Church was widely published in national architectural journals and was recognized as an important work of architecture by contemporary critics. In 1964, Third Unitarian was one of 37 buildings listed as significant by the Commission on Chicago Architectural Landmarks, the forerunner to the current Commission on Chicago Landmarks. In 1965 Third Unitarian was described as "an interesting small church in the modern manner" in the book *Chicago's Famous Buildings*. In 1985 the building was included as a contributing building in the Austin Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places.



Third Unitarian Church is located in the Austin neighborhood on Chicago's West Side. The photograph of the front elevation shows the original auditorium designed by William Schweikher in 1936 at the right, and the addition by William Fyfe from 1956 to the left.

Building Design and Construction

Third Unitarian Church was built in two phases. The original structure was designed by Paul Schweikher in 1936 and consists of a rectangular auditorium with an attached two-story office wing. To accommodate a growing congregation, an addition in 1956 was designed by William Fyfe, an apprentice of Schweikher during the original design. While not as well known as Schweikher, Fyfe was an accomplished architect, and his complimentary addition provides evidence of his talent. Though they are described separately, the original structure and the addition form an integrated work of architecture and a significant landmark.

Original Building 1936

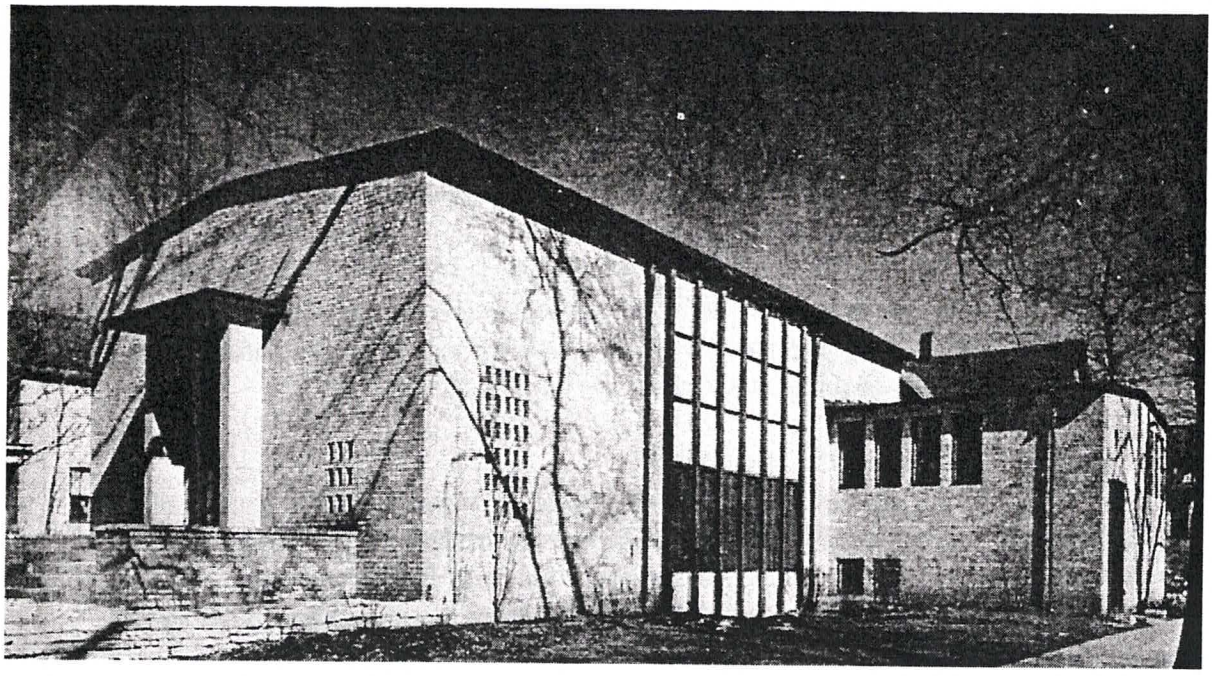
Third Unitarian Church has had a presence on Chicago's West Side since 1868 when it first established a meeting house at Monroe and Laflin Streets. In subsequent decades, the church moved several times following the city's expansion to the west. In 1934 the congregation's church at Lake and Pine Streets burned, and a campaign to build a new church building was begun.

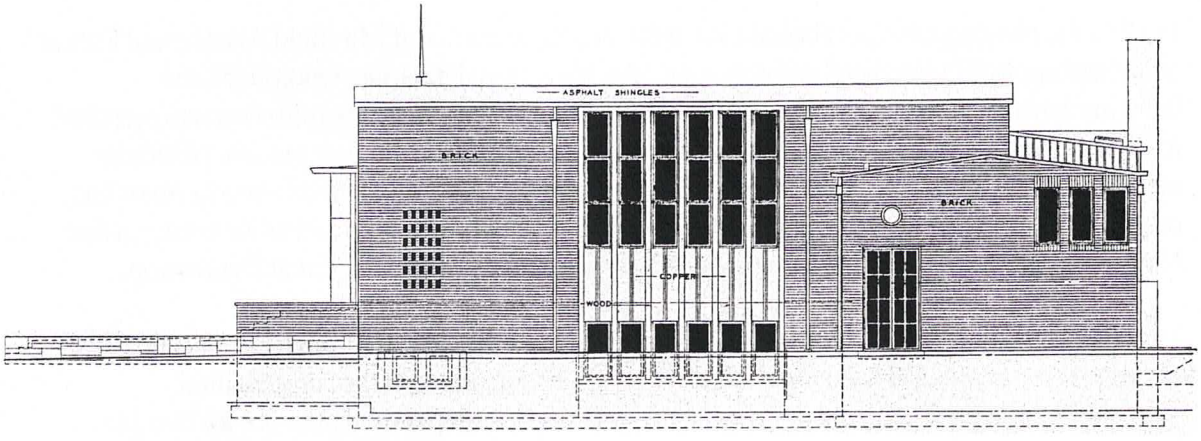
In 1935 the congregation purchased a lot at the northeast corner of Mayfield Avenue and Fulton Street and applied for financial assistance for rebuilding from Unitarian denominational headquarters (the American Unitarian Association) in Boston. The denomination was prepared to offer financial assistance, but expressed a preference that the congregation use a different architect and that they build in the Colonial-Revival style to represent Unitarianism's American origins in New England. The congregation refused the financial support in order to have a free hand in the design of their church, a difficult decision in the midst of the Great Depression.

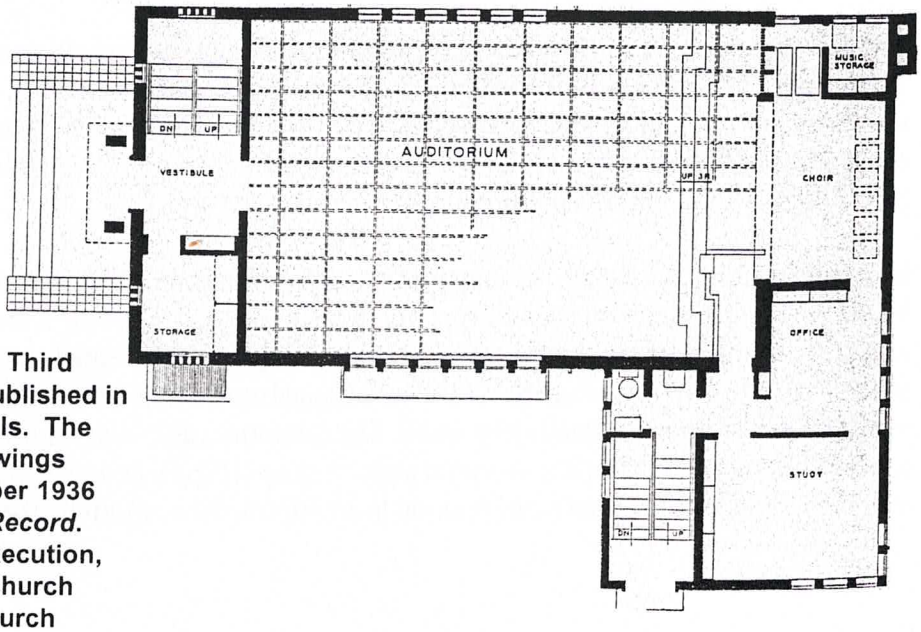
The congregation approached Paul Schweikher to design the church through a connection with one of his employees, William Fyfe, whose family were members of the congregation. Schweikher was a 32-year-old architect who had been in independent practice for two years. He had studied at Yale and achieved some attention when his work was included in a 1933 exhibition of work by Midwestern architects at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

The congregation asked Schweikher to design an affordable church with an auditorium to seat 200 people. To offset construction costs, the congregation asked for simple construction so that its members could provide hands-on assistance during construction. The congregation's small size and limited budget required economy, a challenge that Schweikher embraced. The new church cost $25,000 (roughly equivalent to $350,000 today).

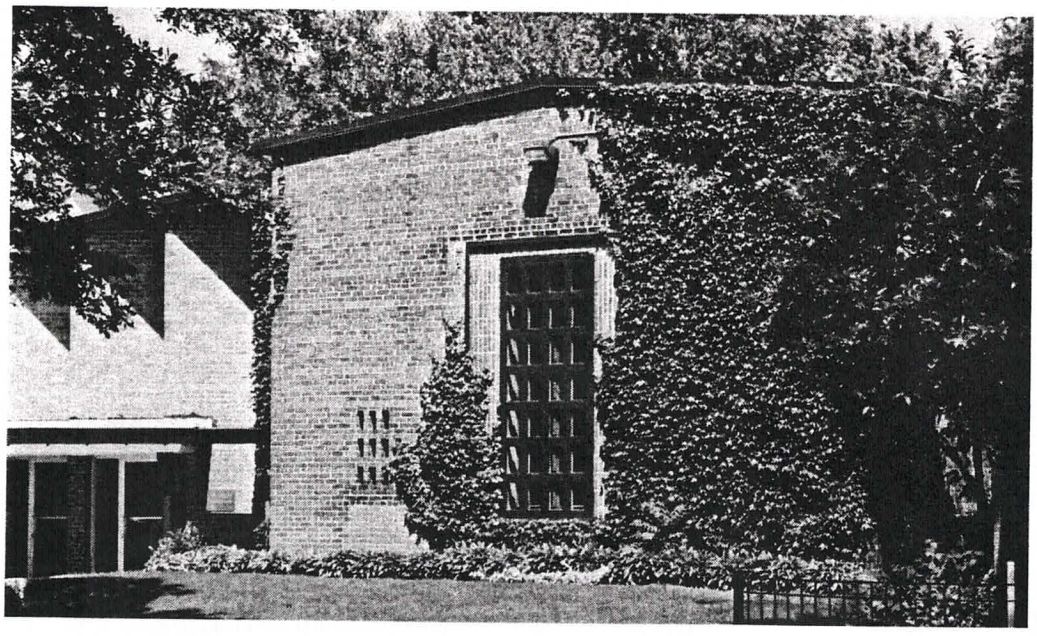
In its original form, the church building consisted of a rectangular auditorium approximately 30' by 50'. Though the form of the building is modern, the original planning of the auditorium reflected a traditional church plan arranged along a single axis. The main entrance door was located at the center of the front façade, which opened onto a small vestibule providing a transition before the main auditorium space. The auditorium itself was furnished with rows of forward-facing pews divided by a central aisle. A raised chancel platform at the front of the church provided a focal point to the interior. In addition to the auditorium, the church in its

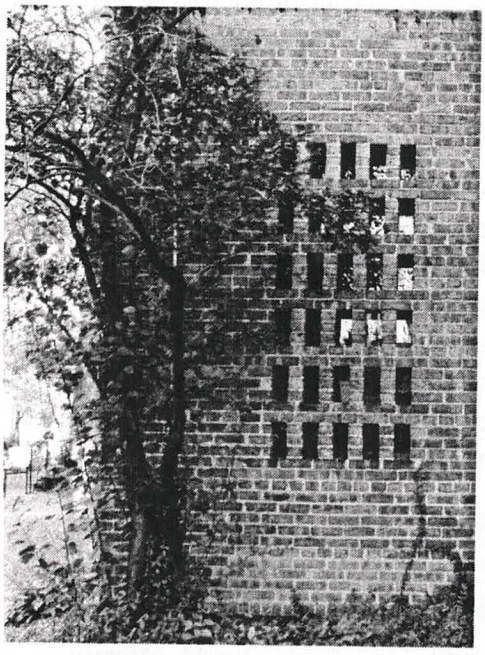


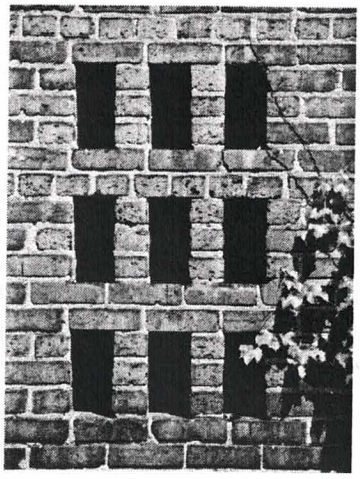




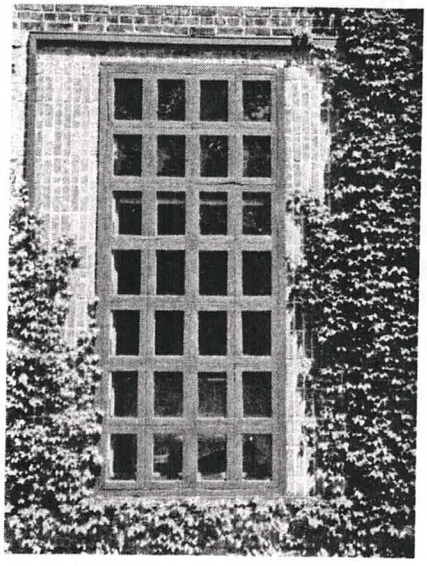
When it was completed, Third Unitarian Church was published in four architectural journals. The photograph and the drawings appeared in the December 1936 edition of *Architectural Record*. Though modern in its execution, the original plan of the church followed a traditional church layout.

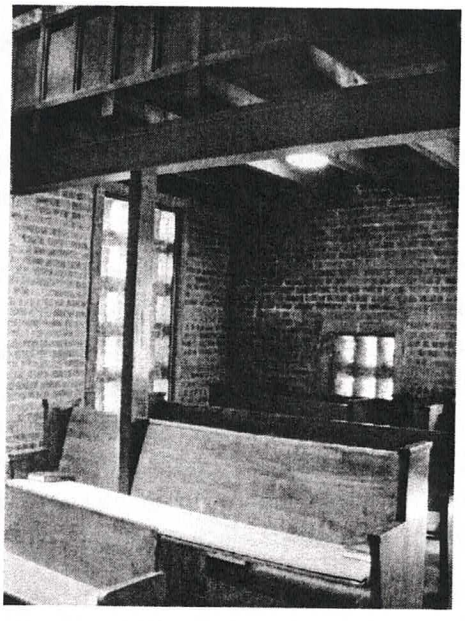






The budget for the church was limited by the economic impact of the Great Depression. Schweikher skillfully used affordable and simple materials like common brick and plain lumber (for the balcony below). The bond pattern of the brick wall is used as a decorative motif for the brick grill windows.





original form contained a finished basement with a kitchen. The small two-story wing projecting from the south side elevation contains an office and conference room.

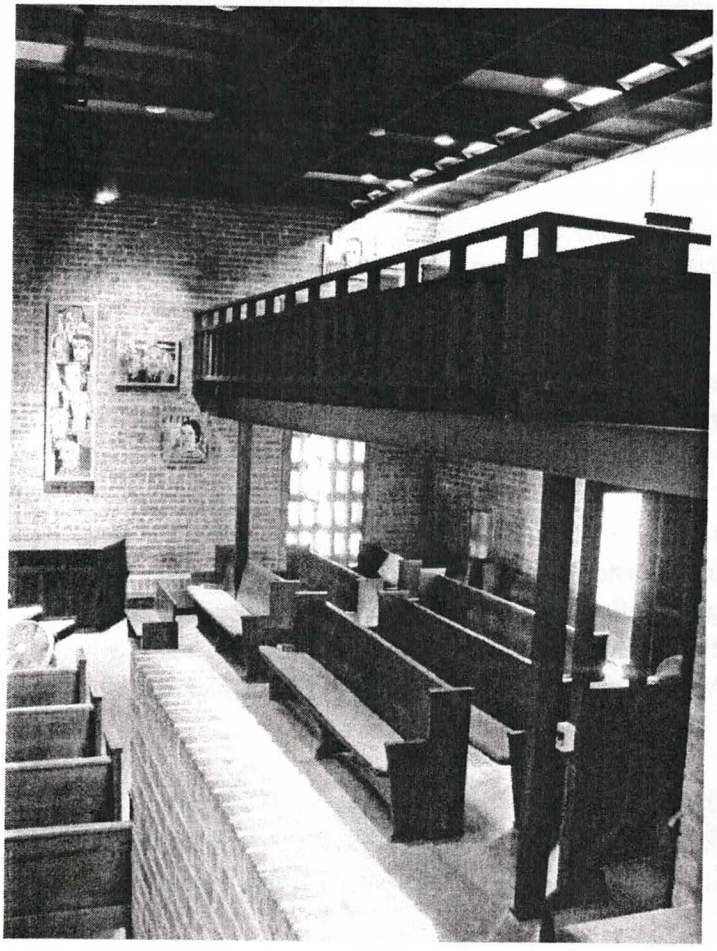
The solid masonry walls were constructed of Chicago common brick set in a common bond. Usually reserved for secondary facades, Schweikher's design elevates this utilitarian wall material as an aesthetic feature. No ornamental masonry is used. The original portion of the building is topped by a low-pitched gable roof. A small steeple at the ridge, the building's only original reference to traditional ecclesiastical architecture, has been lost.

Innovative window designs are a feature of Schweikher's architecture that are much in evidence at Third Unitarian. The front corners of the building feature four "brick grill" windows consisting of a grid of small fixed glass panes set in masonry and divided into a rectangular pattern defined by the brick exterior wall. This rectangular grid motif is repeated in the window wall at the south elevation. Here wood casement windows are grouped together to form a virtual curtain wall extending the full height of the building illuminating both the auditorium and basement. The original milk glass in these windows has since been replaced with hand-made colored art glass. The original wood entrance doors at the west elevation featured a grid of glass panes divided by thick muntins. These doors were converted to fixed casement windows when the addition was made.

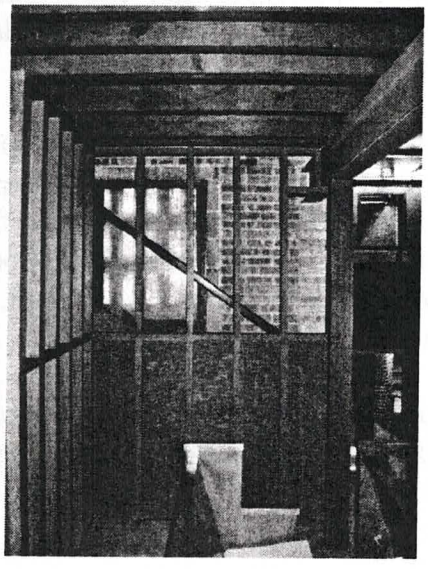
The interior of the original auditorium of the building is finished simply and economically. Brick and wood provide the color and texture of the interior. The common brick walls were left unplastered, appearing the same on the interior of the building as the exterior. The ceiling and chancel wall at the front of the auditorium are covered with white pine plywood panels with battened seams forming a regular grid pattern. Plywood was rarely used as an interior finish at this time. A portion of the plywood chancel wall was designed to be removed to create a stage for performance. The flexibility permitted by movable wall partitions became a characteristic of Schweikher's later domestic interiors for which he became well known.

The wooden balcony at the rear of the auditorium reflects Schweikher's interest in traditional Japanese architecture. The wooden elements of the balcony are left square in section, free of carving or molding. The design emphasizes the structural relationship of the wood joints and the natural color and grain of the material. Schweikher described wood as "always warm, friendly, and human," and used it extensively in his residential interiors.

In later life, Schweikher described his modern design philosophy as "simplify, simplify, simplify ... from the design of a detail, the laying out of a plan, development of an enclosure, the elevation, I wanted to simplify." The design for Third Unitarian expresses these principles in its overall simplicity, functionalism, economic use of materials, and the absence of superficial finishes or ornament. Though it was completed early in his career, Third Unitarian is regarded as one of Schweikher's most important works. The design also represents the progressive and independent values of the congregation who set out to build a new church in the middle of the Great Depression without denominational assistance.



These views show the original portion of the auditorium interior. The plywood sheet wall and ceiling finishes (above) were an innovative use of what was considered an industrial material in 1936. The image at lower left is taken from the addition of the auditorium made in 1956, and shows the reorientation of the space. The image at lower right shows the very plain treatment of the exposed wood structure of the balcony, which consists only of dimensional lumber with an oil finish.



Addition 1956

In the post-war period the congregation at Third Unitarian doubled in size, and in 1956 ground was broken for an addition which would increase seating in the auditorium and provide more classroom and program space. The addition was designed by William Fyfe of the firm of Bertrand Goldberg and Associates. Fyfe worked with Schweikher during the design of the original building and was recommended to the congregation by Schweikher. Fyfe had also apprenticed with Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin, and his devotion to Wright's principles is apparent in the addition with its asymmetry, angular forms, low roofline, and the long horizontal established by the canopy

In plan, the addition was located to the north and east of the original building, resulting in a transformation of the auditorium interior. The long north side wall of the original interior was pushed outward, transforming the space from a narrow rectangle to a more square-shaped space. A raised and inclined gallery with additional seating was provided in the added space. The addition reoriented the auditorium ninety degrees with the pews arranged to face what had been the south side of the original space. The large window wall of the original space became a focal point of the interior behind the relocated chancel platform.

On the exterior, Fyfe set back the front façade of the addition from the original building. The façade consists of slab piers of common brick offset in a saw tooth pattern. The spaces between the piers are glazed with vertical bands of windows to admit natural light into the auditorium. The relocated main entrance is set beneath a low stucco canopy with a distinct angled wood fascia which clearly shows Wright's influence on Fyfe.

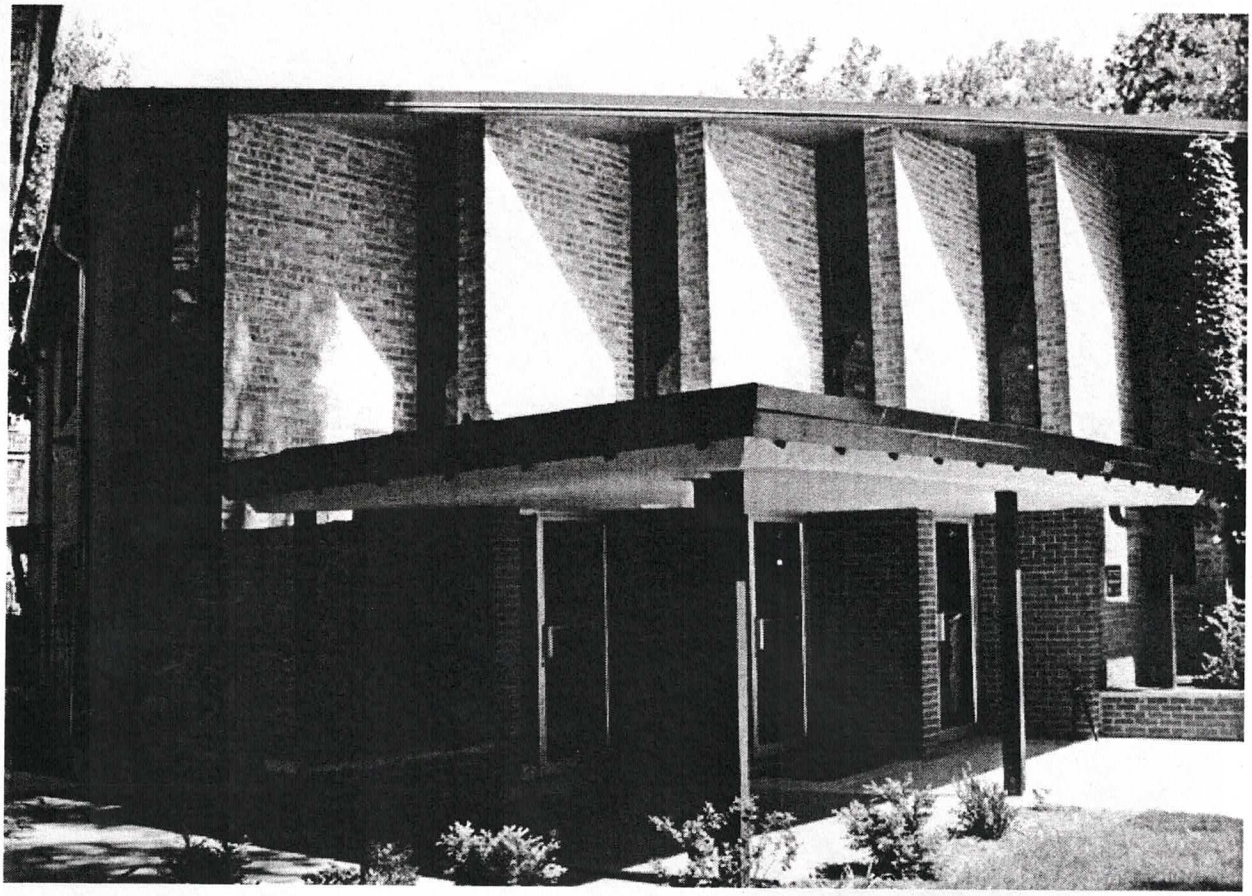
The offset piers on the exterior are expressed on the interior, with the vertical bands of windows opening the interior space to the outside. Like the original interior finish, the brick walls are exposed. The ceiling of the auditorium addition is stepped, with each step aligned with the offset wall piers. Strips of fluorescent lighting carefully concealed behind wood trim at each step line provide a visual rhythm that follows the offset exterior wall as well as providing indirect lighting in the space.

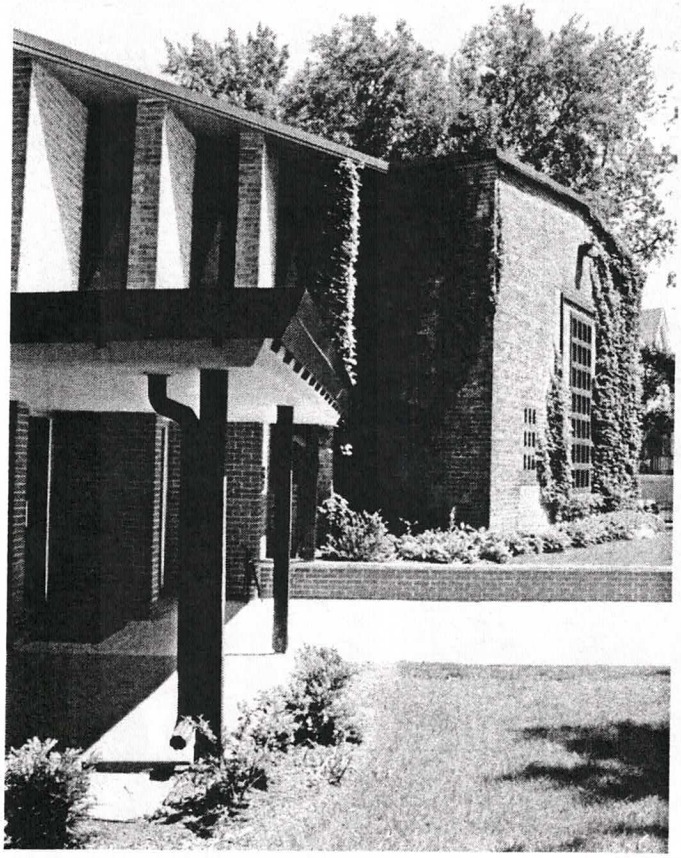
Despite the passage of nearly two decades, the addition is sympathetic to the original in its materials, massing, and modern vocabulary. At the same time, Fyfe's addition is also clearly distinguishable from the original.

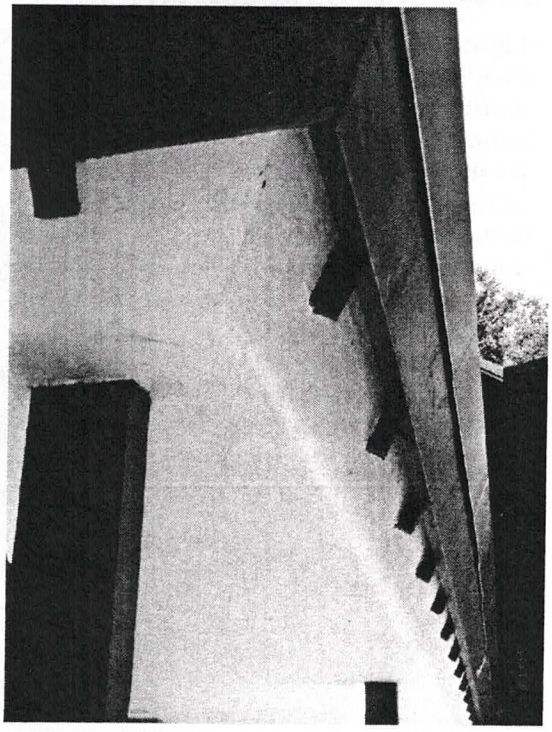
Tile Murals by Andrene Kauffman 1955-1969

A series of nineteen glazed tile murals depicting historic moral, political, and religious figures are an important feature of the interior. The figures reflect the diverse sources of inspiration within Unitarianism, including Jesus Christ, Goethe, Woodrow Wilson, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Parker, Emerson, Gandhi, Jane Addams, Moses, Martin Luther King, Harriet Tubman, Buddha, Socrates, and Confucius.

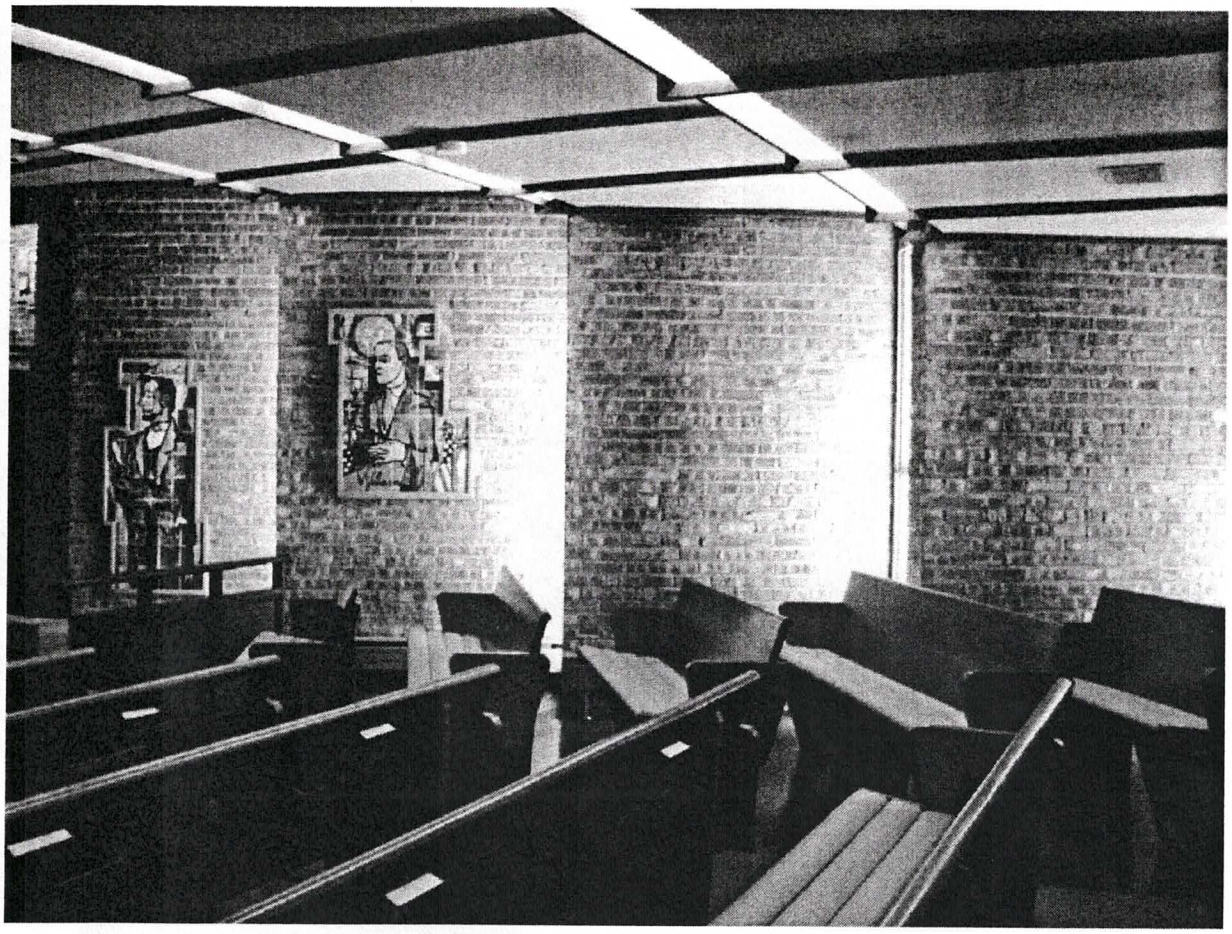
The tile murals were painted and fired by prominent Chicago artist and teacher Andrene Kauffman. She began her career as a professional artist in the 1930s under Illinois Art Project of the Federal Works Project Administration (WPA) where she created 25 murals in schools





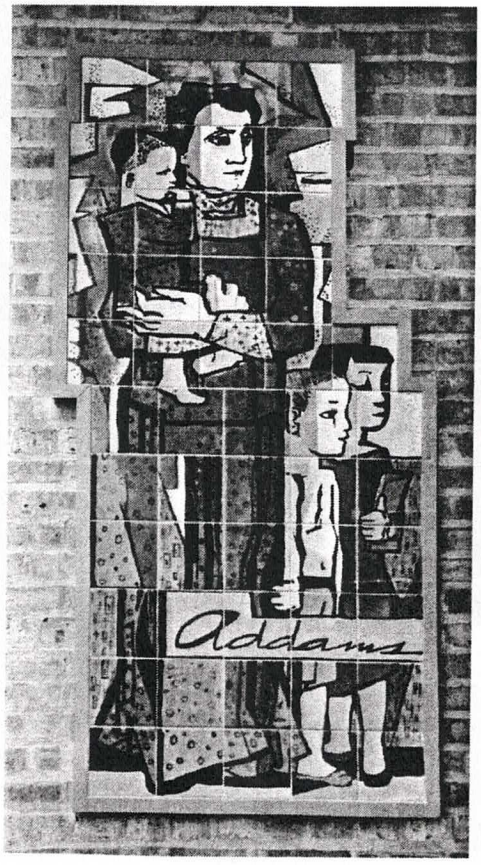


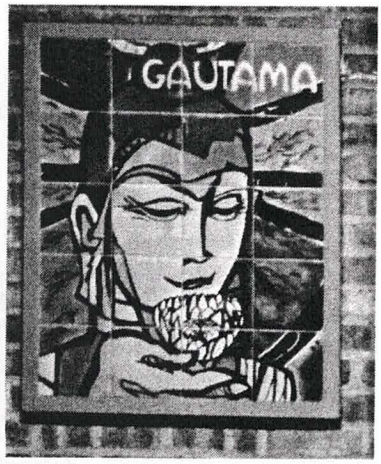
To make room for an expanding congregation, an addition was made in 1956 by architect William Fyfe. The front facade (top) consists of offset wall slabs with vertical window bands. The front of the addition is set back from, and kept below, the original construction (left). A detail of the canopy (above).

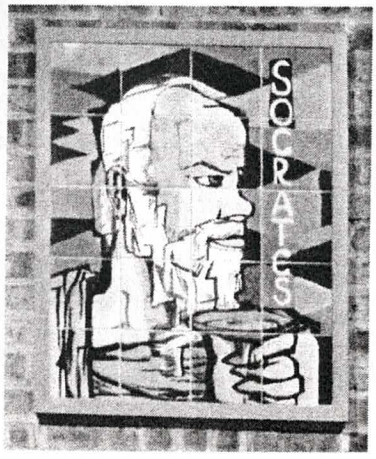


Light is a feature of Fyfe's addition to the auditorium (above) with bands of natural light washing the sawtooth walls which correspond to fluorescent lights at the stepped ceiling.

A selection of the painted tile murals created by Chicago artist Andrene Kauffman between 1955 and 1969.







and public buildings throughout the Midwest. In Chicago, examples of her WPA work survive at Burbank Public School. Her work was exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. From 1927 to 1967 she taught painting and drawing at the School of the Art Institute.

Kauffman was a member of the congregation, and she produced the murals one at a time between 1955 and 1969. The dedication of newly completed murals was often noted in the Chicago tribune during this period. The murals are clearly influenced by expressionist and cubist painting and contribute to the modern aesthetic of the interior of Third Unitarian.

Architect Paul Schweikher

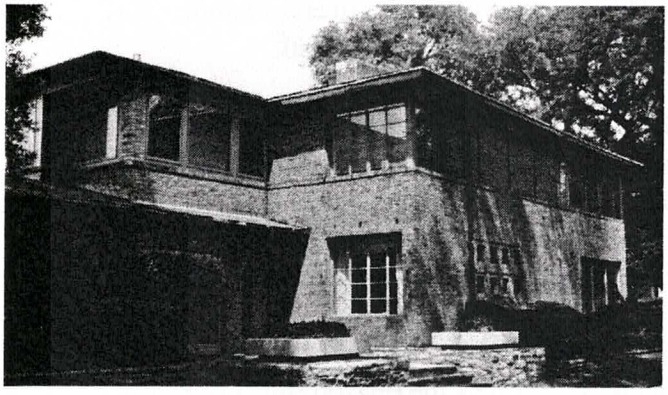
Paul Schweikher (1903-1997) was born in Denver, Colorado in 1903. After a year of college at the University of Colorado, he followed his fiance to Chicago in 1922 and began studying drawing at the Art Institute of Chicago. From 1924 to 1926 he took night classes in architecture and engineering at the Chicago Atelier and the Illinois Institute of Technology. During the same period, Schweikher worked as a draftsman with Lowe and Bollenbacher and later with David Adler. Though Adler worked in historical revival styles of architecture, Schweikher credited him with teaching him to see scale, proportion, and detail.

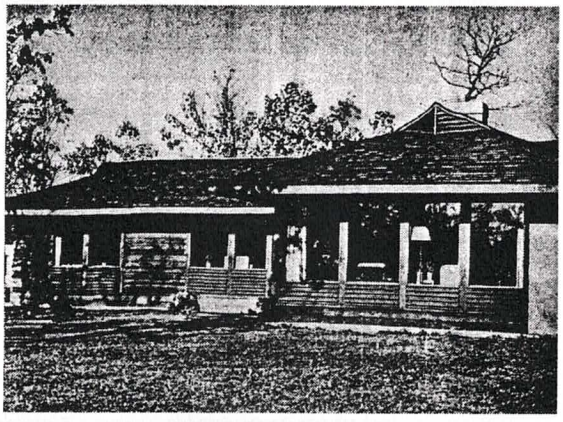
In 1927 Schweikher left Chicago to study architecture at Yale where he was steeped in the Beaux-Arts tradition of architecture. After earning his BFA in 1929 he was awarded a traveling scholarship. During his nine month trip to Europe, Schweikher studied recent works by Van der Vlugt, Mies van der Rohe, and Le Corbusier. He returned to Chicago and began working in a variety of architectural firms including Philip T. Maher, George Fred Keck, and Howard T. Fisher.

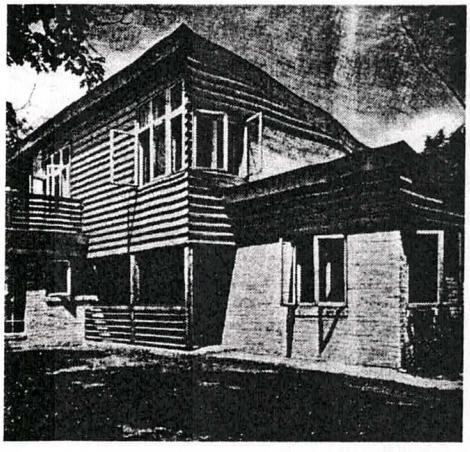
Schweikher gained national exposure in 1933 when his study for the Eliason House (unbuilt) was included in an exposition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. A review in the *New York Times* praised his design for its ability to add visual enrichment to an otherwise purely functional house. In the same year Schweikher started his own architectural practice out of his apartment in the Marshall Field Garden Apartments on the North Side. Ted Lamb, a fellow student from Yale, was Schweikher's partner, and the office employed Bertrand Goldberg and William Fyfe (who would later design the addition at Third Unitarian Church) during this period. In 1935 Schweikher and Lamb won first place in a national house design competition sponsored by General Electric, propelling them into the national spotlight.

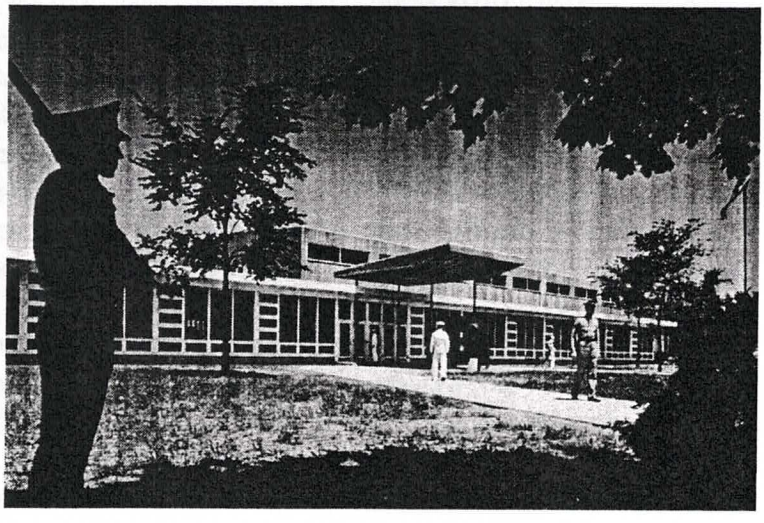
Following the completion of Third Unitarian up to World War II, Schweikher and Lamb produced over twenty modern single-family-residences in the Chicago area and as far away as Arizona, plus a handful of institutional buildings. Noteworthy residential projects from this period include: the Johnson House (1936) at 6956 S. Bennett St (a contributing building in the Jackson Park Highlands Chicago Landmark District), his own home and studio in Schaumburg (1940), a cooperative of seven houses in Glenview (1938-41), and the award-winning Lewis House in Park Ridge (1941). Exposed structure, low-sloped roofs with wide eaves, large

From the 1930s through the 1960s, Chicago architect Paul Schweikher (right) played an important role in the development of modernism in America. Residential projects dominated the first half of his career, including the Johnson House from 1936 (middle left) in the Jackson Park Highlands Chicago Landmark District; a group of cooperative houses in Glenview (middle right) from 1938-41; and the Lowenstein House from 1939 (bottom left). Institutional buildings from this period include officer's Housing at the Great Lakes Naval training Station north of Chicago (bottom right).









windows, removable interior panel partitions, and plywood interior finishes and built-in furniture are common features of these houses.

Institutional buildings designed by Schweikher and Lamb before the war include the Emerson Settlement House on Chicago's West Side (1939, demolished), and Officers Quarters at the Great Lakes Naval Training Center north of Chicago (1942). Schweikher continued to use basic materials in these buildings, but adopted new innovations building technologies such as wire reinforced brick masonry and glued-laminated timber trusses. Throughout the late-1930s and early-1940s, Schweikher and Lamb's work was frequently published in architectural journals in the United States as well as in England, France, Italy, and Argentina.

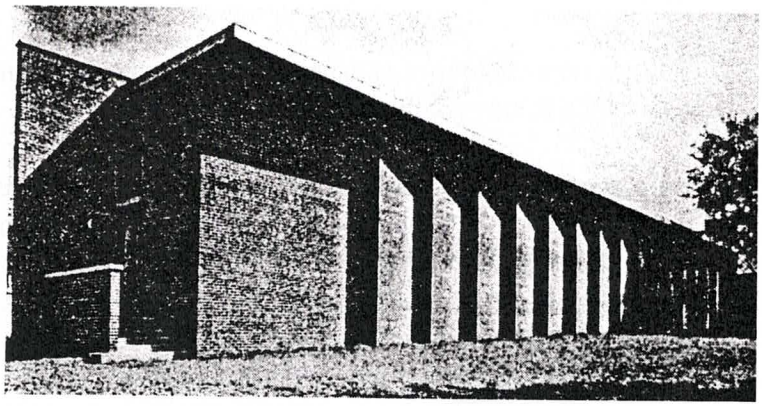
Schweikher and Lamb suspended their practice in 1942 to join the war effort during which Schweikher served in the Naval Reserves. Ted Lamb was killed while in the service. After the war Schweikher reestablished his practice in partnership with Winston Elting in 1945 out of his home and studio in Schaumburg. Schweikher focused on the design work in the firm, while Elting supervised construction.

Modern residences continued to be an important part of the firm's work. Schweikher's houses turned inward with large open interior courtyards and almost windowless exteriors. Educational and religious buildings began to play a more dominant role in Schweikher's practice after the war. His 1953 design of the Faith United Protestant Church in the Chicago suburb of Park Forest consists of a simple rectangular form clad in lannon stone at the sides with an open, glazed curtain wall at front of the building. His 1954 elementary school in Schaumburg combined an austere steel and glass structure with natural field stone cladding of one exterior wall. Maryville College in Tennessee provided Schweikher with important commissions in the 1950s. His Fine Arts Building for the college from 1951 featured exposed concrete and steel structure. Three years later his chapel and theater complex for the college featured thin-shell concrete vaults and a colonnaded plaza. In 1954 architecture critic Vincent Scully cited Schweikher's work at Maryville as indicative of a shift in modern American architecture from pure functionalism toward a greater interest in architectural forms.

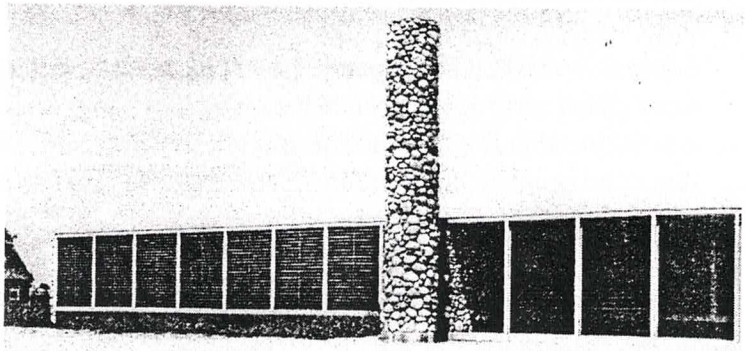
In 1953 entered academia, first as Chairman of the Department of Architecture at Yale University until 1956, then as head of the Architecture at the Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie-Mellon) from 1956 until 1970. In addition to teaching, Schweikher maintained his architectural practice during this period. Religious and university buildings dominated his practice at this time, and Schweikher made extensive use of reinforced concrete in this period. An important works from this period include the reinforced concrete Unitarian Church (1960) in Evanston at 1330 Ridge Avenue with its monolithic walls and beams cast as one piece. Schweikher's Duquesne University Student Union (1967) in Pittsburgh shows the architect's evolution towards the brutalist strain of modern architecture at the end of his career. Schweikher retired from academia in 1970 and moved to Sedona, Arizona, where he continued a small private practice until his death in 1997.

Paul Schweikher made a significant contribution to modern architecture in Chicago and throughout the United States from the 1930s through the 1960s. The historiography of modern

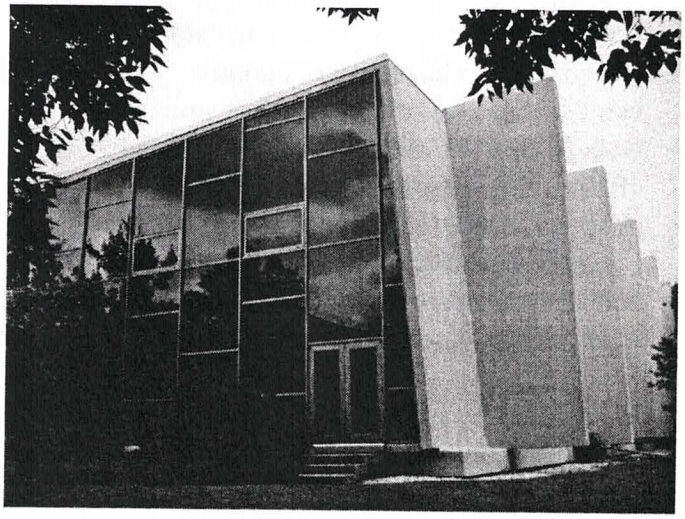
In addition to pursuing an academic career, Schweikher maintained an active architectural practice in the 1950s and 1960s. He earned ever-larger commissions in this period, which encouraged him to evolve and adapt his sensitive handling of materials to larger constructions in concrete and steel.



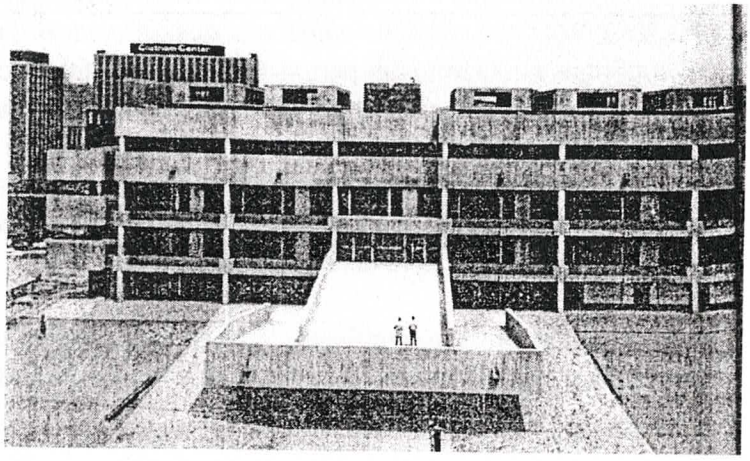
The sawtooth wall face of his Auditorium at Maryville College in Tennessee (top) is the same technique used by Fyfe's addition to Third Unitarian.



The Consolidated Elementary School in Schaumburg from 1954 (second from top) combined a fieldstone tower with crisp steel and glass.



The Unitarian Church in Evanston from 1959 (second from bottom) used monolithic concrete beams and a transparent glass wall.



Schweikher's design for a Student Union at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh from 1967 (bottom) shows the influence of Brutalism in Schweikher's later institutional buildings.

architecture in Chicago often focuses on Frank Lloyd Wright and his Prairie School on one hand, and the development of commercial skyscraper culminating in the achievements of Mies van der Rohe on the other. These standard views have tended to overlook Paul Schweikher, part of a group of modern architects who shaped their own idiosyncratic interpretations of modernism. Nevertheless, Schweikher was well recognized by his peers as a significant modern architect while he was alive.

Though his early apprenticeship was in a firm specializing in historic house styles, and his architectural training at Yale followed the Beaux Arts tradition, Schweikher became an avant-garde architect whose work continually evolved. Schweikher's talent may have rested on his ability to synthesize diverse threads and movements in architecture including the Midwest's Prairie School with its sensitivity to materials and nature, and European modernism with its focus on simplicity and order.

Though not as well known as Schweikher, William Beye Fyfe (1911-2001) was an important architect whose contribution is beginning to be studied. He was raised in Oak Park where he became fascinated by the architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright. He earned his architectural degree from Yale in 1932, and secured a fellowship with Frank Lloyd Wright at Taliesin in Spring Green Wisconsin. Following his fellowship at Taliesin, Fyfe returned to Chicago and began working with Schweikher. Following his employment with Schweikher, Fyfe worked with Bertrand Goldberg until 1956 and then Perkins and Will from 1957-75. His best known work is the master plan and design of all buildings at College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, from 1957-1971.

Unitarianism and Architecture

While most religious architecture in America has relied heavily on historical styles of architecture, Unitarianism has fostered progressive church architecture, as shown by Third Unitarian Church. The progressive quality exhibited in Unitarian architecture is regarded as an expression of the denomination's theological liberalism.

Theological liberalism was a broad movement embraced by many Protestant denominations in the late nineteenth century. It sought to modernize religious practice and belief to be more relevant to the conditions of modern life. A search for the basic principles of divinity and humanity was more important than specific creeds or traditions. This rational movement maintained a positive view of human nature. Advances in science and culture were proof of the human capacity to cure social ills and human suffering. Though these are religious principals provide, they bare a striking resemblance to the aesthetic intentions of the modern movement in architecture.

The horrors of World War I and the subsequent economic Depression caused many denominations to abandon theological liberalism in favor of orthodoxy. Unitarians however remained committed to liberalism. This character became especially strong in the Unitarian congregations of the Midwest, where a group of preachers known as the "Unity Men"

promoted a radically modern approach of religious humanism which rejected specific creeds, and to some critics, even the existence of divinity outside of humanity.

Unitarian minister Jenkin Lloyd Jones (1843-1918) was a prominent figure in this context. Born in Wisconsin, Jones served in the Civil War before studying theology. Jones spent most of his career in Chicago, where he sought to adapt Unitarianism to the new social conditions and culture emerging in the city. In an 1882 sermon, Jones described the ideal church as a place of social unity which would welcome the "high and low, rich and poor, better and worse, believer and unbeliever."

Jones was the uncle of Frank Lloyd Wright and showed the same inclination for architecture as his nephew. In 1886 he worked closely with architect Joseph L. Silsbee to design his ideal church. The resulting All Souls Church (demolished) on Chicago's South Side resembled a large Queen Anne-style residence rather than a church. Fireplaces in the auditorium reflected Jones' idea that church should provide a comfortable, home-like environment. In 1902 Jones commissioned Frank Lloyd Wright to design a larger mixed-use religious building named the Abraham Lincoln Center. Jones asked his nephew to design an innovative an economical building: "I am thinking of a building of modern architecture, gracious though not gorgeous, representing in its lines dignity, hospitality and service, a building with four faces, each honest and clean." The Abraham Lincoln Center is regarded as a pre-cursor to Wright's second Unitarian commission: Unity Temple in Oak Park (1906).

Within this historical context of architectural innovation in Unitarianism in the Chicago area, it is not surprising that the congregation at Third Unitarian Church was receptive to Paul Schweikher's modern church design in 1936.

The Community and the Congregation

Third Unitarian Church is located in the southern part of the Austin community area on Chicago's far West Side. Austin traces its roots back to 1865 when Henry Austin began developing land in Cicero Township as an early railroad suburb. Convenient commuter rail service between Cicero township and Chicago's loop ensured the desirability of Austin. In the 1870s and 1890s, the area was built up with large, high quality residences in period architectural styles. Fine examples of these survive four blocks north of Third Unitarian, including several that have been designated as Chicago Landmarks (The Hitchcock House [1871], Four Houses by Architect Frederick Schock [1886-1892], and The Walser House [1903]).

In 1898, the Lake Street "L" train (now the CTA's Green Line) arrived in Austin. In 1899 Austin was annexed to the city of Chicago and developed into the city's largest and most populated neighborhood. By the 1920s Austin reached maturity as a residential community of middle-class German, Italian, and Irish families.

It was into this community that the Third Unitarian congregation began building their new church in 1936. Unitarianism originated in Europe as a form of dissent within mainline Protestantism. In America, Unitarianism evolved beyond Christianity toward a broad-based religious humanism

that accepted a range of spiritual influences. The liberal and progressive character of the congregation at times created friction with the community. In 1969 a smoke bomb was tossed into the church during a screening of a documentary about the demonstrations the previous year at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

From the 1960 to 1970, Austin changed from a predominantly white to a predominantly African-American community. Overcrowded housing, poverty and unemployment became important social issues in the neighborhood. Like many congregations located in areas of dramatic demographic change, Third Unitarian considered moving. In the 1980s a majority of the congregation voted to move, yet a significant minority contravened the intention of the vote and decided to stay in the neighborhood. The congregation's commitment to social justice and community activism has made Third Unitarian a stabilizing influence in the community.

Criteria for Designation

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sec. 2-120-620 and -630), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a preliminary recommendation of landmark designation for a building, structure, or district if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for landmark designation," as well as possesses a significant degree of its historic design integrity.

The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the Third Unitarian Church Building be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

Criterion 1: Critical Part of the City's History

Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois or the United States.

- The Third Unitarian Church building is an unusual and early example of modern architecture in Chicago, a style of architecture that Chicago played an important role in defining.

- The Third Unitarian Church building exemplifies the influence of Unitarianism, as a progressive religious denomination, on modern architecture.

- With its continued presence in the Austin neighborhood, Third Unitarian Church exemplifies the important role that houses of worship play in the economic, social, and cultural life of Chicago's neighborhoods.

Criterion 4: Important Architecture

Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.

- With its simple, functional design, lack of historical ornament, exposed structure, and straightforward use of simple materials, the 1936 design for Third Unitarian Church exemplifies the basic principles of the modern design movement in architecture.

- The Third Unitarian Church building represents an early Chicago example of a house of worship built in the modern style of architecture, a style that would not be generally embraced by religious denominations until well after World War II.

Criterion 5: Important Architect

Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, or the United States.

- From the 1930s through the 1960s, Paul Schweikher made an important contribution to the development of modern architecture in America through his emphasis on the straightforward expression of simple building materials such as brick and wood.

- Schweikher's work was frequently published, and he was recognized as an important architect by his peers. He was also influential in architectural education through serving as the director of important architecture schools, including Yale.

- Schweikher was a prolific architect whose body of work includes over fifty houses (with 35 in the Chicago area alone), six churches, and over twenty institutional buildings scattered across the country. His long and productive career spanned a dynamic period in American architecture through which Schweikher's work continually evolved.

Integrity Criterion

The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architectural or aesthetic interest or value.

Third Unitarian Church was built in two phases: the original building was designed by architect Paul Schweikher in 1936; and in 1956 an addition was made by architect William Fyfe, an apprentice to Schweikher at the time of the original construction. The overall design, massing, and materials of the addition are complimentary to the original construction, while at the same time expressing a distinct identity. Together both parts of the building form a complete work of modern architecture with excellent physical integrity.

Significant Historical and Architectural Features

Whenever a building is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owner and the public to understand which elements are

considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark district.

Based on its preliminary evaluation of the Third Unitarian Church building, the Commission staff recommends that the significant features be identified as:

- all exterior building elevations, including rooflines, visible from public rights-of-way.

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The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. It is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual buildings, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law. The Commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Planning and Development, 33 N. LaSalle St., Room 1600, Chicago, IL 60602; (312-744-3200) phone; TDD, (312-744-2958); (312-744-9140) fax; web site, http://www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks

This Preliminary Summary of Information is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation proceedings. Only language contained within the landmark ordinance enacted by the City Council should be regarded as final.